

even faster pace in the years of the foreseeable future. To accommodate this vast population expansion will require an enlargement of governmental services, at the federal, State and local levels. And it is entirely appropriate for government at these levels to bring these services as close as possible to the people. This is what the Social Security Administration has done in this instance, and in so doing it has merited the appreciation and the gratitude of all of us.

Social Security, as a concept and as an actuality, has grown by leaps and bounds during the nearly three decades of its existence. It is a product, as we know, of the great depression of the 1930's which rocked the economy of this country to its very foundations. It was devised as a cure for our economic ills. But it went much deeper than this. It went to the core of our deep feelings as Americans for the general welfare of all the people of this country. And so, it was a humanitarian concept, as well as a practical economic concept. The idea was that, with government encouragement and support, the people would save their money in times of their greatest earning capacity for use in times when these earning capacities had diminished. It was not, therefore, charity, though in a sense its idea was charitable in the broadest sense of the term.

Of course, Social Security needs no defenders nowadays. I can recall — and I believe many others here can recall — when Social Security was an issue of great controversy in this country. Today, it is all but universally accepted as a principle and as a way of life. Today, I am advised, approximately one of every 20 persons living in the area served by this Social Security District Office receives a monthly Social Security check — as retired workers and their dependents, as disabled workers and their dependents, as survivors of deceased workers and as other beneficiaries of the program.

In Maryland, as of the end of last year, the Social Security Administration was paying out monthly in benefits to these people nearly \$16 million. It takes very little imagination to comprehend what these figures mean in terms of the happiness and welfare of these recipients, as well as in terms of the strength they add to the overall economic well-being of our State. And so, it is with gladness and gratitude in our hearts that we witness the advancement of the Social Security program in Maryland, as well as in other parts of the country. Let us, then, by the ceremonial gesture of this ribbon-cutting dedicate this fine new facility to the present and future contentment and prosperity of the men, women and children benefitting under this enlightened government program.